

The FFA is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of young people by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. With a 74-year history, the FFA has been an integral part in continuing America's great tradition as a leader in agriculture production.

The Flagler chapter of the Future Farmers of America is a source of pride for the community of Flagler and all people of Colorado. The team has shown great strength and fortitude by placing in the top five of all teams competing. I ask the House to join me in extending wholehearted congratulations to the Flagler chapter of the Future Farmers of America team.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROSE BELLANCA
"2001 WOMAN OF THE YEAR" CO-
LUMBUS DAY CELEBRATION

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 4, 2001

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, each year the Italian American community celebrates Columbus Day, with festivities including a weekend of food, music, and fun, as well as an annual Columbus Day Parade and Banquet. With organizations and committees dedicated to promoting and preserving the Italian-American heritage through language, culture, music, and social events, the Columbus Day Committee is no exception. Honoring distinguished Italian-Americans who have shown outstanding service in their local communities, each year the Columbus Day Committee selects individuals who demonstrate these qualities. On Sunday, October 7, as the families and friends gathered together at their annual Columbus Day Banquet, they recognized Dr. Rose Bellanca their "2001 Woman of the Year".

Demonstrating outstanding dedication and commitment to her students, her colleagues, and her community, Dr. Rose Bellanca has always been an active and enthusiastic supporter of education and advancement. Beginning her teaching career in 1973 at Fitzgerald High School in Macomb County, a short nine years later she was the first woman serving as the Director of Vocational-Technical Education in Macomb County while working for the Chipewa Valley School District. Her hard work and relentless pursuit for excellence in education led her to become Assistant to the President of Macomb Community College, where she served as Interim Vice President for Student and Community Relations and later Vice President for Planning and Development. Today, as Provost of Macomb Community College, her strong focus on students continues to be her priority, and her hard work and innovative ideas continue to make her a leader in educational advancement.

Faithfully committed to promoting her Italian American heritage as well, Dr. Bellanca is also an active member of the American Italian Professional and Business Women's Club and the Americans of Italian Origin Society. She has received the Macomb County Woman of Distinction Award by the Girl Scouts of Macomb

County, as she is truly a role model for young women and young Italian American women. A devoted mother and wife of 30 years, a professional, and a friend, Dr. Bellanca truly is this year's "Woman of the Year".

I applaud the 2001 Columbus Day Committee and Dr. Bellanca for their leadership, commitment, and service, and I urge my colleagues to join me in saluting them for their exemplary years, of leadership and service.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2299,
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 30, 2001

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member rises in support of the conference report for H.R. 2299, the Transportation appropriations bill for fiscal year 2002.

This Member would like to commend the distinguished gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS), the Chairman of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, and the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO), the ranking member of the Subcommittee for their hard work in bringing this conference report to the Floor.

Mr. Speaker, this Member certainly recognizes the severe budget constraints under which the full Appropriations Committee and the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee operated. In light of these constraints, this Member is grateful and pleased that this legislation includes funding for several important projects of interest to the State of Nebraska.

This Member is particularly pleased that this appropriations bill includes \$1.5 million for preliminary work leading to the construction of bridges in Plattsmouth and Sarpy County to replace two obsolete and deteriorating bridges. The request for these funds was made by this Member as well as the distinguished gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) and the distinguished gentlemen from Iowa (Mr. GANSKE and Mr. BOSWELL).

The agreement leading to the funding was the result of intensive discussions and represents the consensus of city, county and state officials as well as the affected Members of Congress. The construction of these replacement bridges (a Plattsmouth U.S. 34 bridge and State Highway 370 bridge in Bellevue) will result in increased safety and improved economic development in the area. Clearly, the bridge projects would benefit both counties and the surrounding region.

This Member is also pleased that the conference report includes \$4 million for Nebraska's Intelligent Transportation System (ITS). This funding, which was requested by this Member and the distinguished gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE), is to be used to facilitate travel efficiencies and increased safety within the state.

The Nebraska Department of Roads has identified numerous opportunities where ITS

could be used to assist urban and rural transportation. For instance, the proposed Statewide Joint Operations Center would provide a unifying element allowing ITS components to share information and function as an intermodal transportation system. Among its many functions, the Joint Operations Center will facilitate rural and statewide maintenance vehicle fleet management, roadway management and roadway maintenance conditions. Overall, the practical effect will be to save lives, time and money.

This Member is also pleased that the conference report includes \$1 million for a Highway 66 bypass south of Louisville, Nebraska. This project, which has the support of the Louisville mayor and city council as well as the Cass County commissioners, would provide significant safety and economic development benefits for the area.

The conference report also includes \$325,000 requested by this Member for the construction of the 1.7-mile Lewis & Clark bicycle and pedestrian trail on State Spur 26E right-of-way, which connects Ponca State Park and the Missouri National Recreational River Corridor to the City of Ponca. This trail will play an especially important role as the area prepares for the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery expedition and the significant increase in tourism which it will help generate. The approaching bicentennial represents a significant national opportunity and it is crucial that communities such as Ponca have the resources necessary to prepare for this significant commemoration.

The trail will provide the infrastructure necessary to improve the quality of life by providing pedestrian and bicycle access between Ponca and the Ponca State Park and increases the potential for economic benefits in the surrounding region. The trail addresses serious safety issues by providing a separate off-road facility for bicyclists and pedestrians.

It is certainly important to note that this conference report includes \$1.6 million for the Antelope Valley Overpass in Lincoln, Nebraska. This bridge is an integral piece of a comprehensive plan to revitalize downtown Lincoln that has emerged from a partnership between the City, the State of Nebraska, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The funds would assist with the design and right-of-way phase of a bridge that would span railroad tracks. This funding will supplement the \$5,625,000 which this Member had successfully sought in the 1998 TEA-21 legislation.

In addition, the conference report includes \$200,000 to study the feasibility and fiscal impact of the passenger rail project between Lincoln and Omaha, Nebraska. The metropolitan areas of Omaha and Lincoln are becoming increasingly integrated. The fringes get closer together every year and the inter-city highway commuter traffic is increasing significantly. The growing congestion will only get worse in the coming years. A far-sighted approach is necessary to address the needs of commuters and others using the corridor. The proposed study is a necessary component in this process. It would examine such important issues as travel patterns, ridership potential for rail service and cost evaluations.

Adequate funding is clearly needed to make this study and the overall project a reality. A